GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:35
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2004
TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN RURAL AREAS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government at the time of giving licences to the telecom companies entrusted them with the task of establishing telecommunication system in rural areas;

(b) if so, the number of such villages and the time limit to complete the task along with the names of these companies;

(c) the target achieved by these companies upto September, 2004; and

(d) the time limit prescribed to complete the remaining target?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) to (d) The six private basic telephone service Licensee, who were granted licences in 1997-98, were to provide a fix number of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in their respective service area. The details of number of villages to be provided with VPTs by these six private operators along with time limit and their achievement upto 31st October 2003 are enclosed as Annexure. The Government has recovered liquidated damages to the tune of Rs. 53.75 crores from these six private basic telephone service operators for non-fulfillment of roll out obligations in terms of commencement of service as well as in provisioning of Direct Exchange Lines (DELs) and VPTs. Consequent to announcement of Unified Access Service Licence regime, these six private basic telephone service Licensee have migrated to Unified Access Service Licence regime in November 2003 and thereby the roll out obligations have changed to coverage of District Headquarters instead of provisioning of fixed number of! DELs and VPTs.

ANNEXURE

VPT STATUS OF PRIVATE BASIC SERVICE OPERATORS

VPTs	Bharati Telenet Ltd. Andhra Madhya Pradesh Ltd. Pradesh	Tata Teleservices	Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra)	Reliance Telecom Gujarat	Shyam Telelink Rajasthan	HFCL Infotel. Punjab	Total
Month of commencement of service	June 1998	March 1999	October 1998	May 2000	June 2000	Sept 2000	
No. of VPTs Committed in first 3 years from effective date	16500	9635	25760	8635	31834	5442	97806
Cumulative No. of VPTs provided by 31.10.2003	611	1408	2643	4114	3010	879	12665

These commitments were to be met by 30-9-1998 in case of AP, Gujarat, Punjab, and by 30-9-99 in case of Maharashtra. For MP and Rajasthan the same were to be completed by 30-9-2000 and 4.3.2001 respectively.

Figures are as reported by the licensees.
As all villages have been covered in Punjab by BSNL, the faulty MARRs are replaced by the private licensees.